

BETWEEN FLORENCE AND AVIGNON

which she has lost; for so much blood has been sucked from her by iniquitous devourers, that she has become all pallid. But take heart and come, father, and do not make the servants of God wait, who are afflicted with desire. And I, miserable, wretched woman, can wait no more; living, I seem to die in pain at seeing God so outraged. Do not postpone the peace because of what has happened at Bologna, but come; for I tell you that the fierce wolves will lay their heads in your lap like meek lambs, and crave you to pardon them, father. I say no more. I beseech you, father, to hear and listen to what Fra Raimondo will tell you, and the other sons who are with him, who are coming in the name of Christ crucified and in my name; for they are true servants of Christ and children of Holy Church."¹

And, a little later, she wrote to Raimondo and his companions: • 'I am dying and cannot die, I am bursting and cannot burst, *with* the desire that I have for the renovation of Holy Church, for the honour of God, and the salvation of every creature, and of seeing you and the others robed with purity, burned and consumed in His most ardent charity. Tell Christ on earth not to make me wait any longer. And when I see him, I shall sing with that sweet old man Simeon: *Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word*'"²

All immediate prospects of a reconciliation between Italy and the Holy See seemed dashed to the ground by the revolt of Bologna and the sack of Faenza. On the last day of March, Jacopo di Ceva, the fiscal advocate of the Curia who had formulated the process, demanded in full consistory that sentence should be pronounced against the Florentines. Their two ambassadors, Donato Barbadori and Alessandro dell' Antella, duly

¹ Letter 206 (5), amended by the Harleian MS. Raimondo's own words, *Legenda*, III. vi. 26 (§ 420), might be taken as meaning that he was sent to the Pope *after* the promulgation of the sentence against the Florentines; that is, in April; but the internal evidence of this and Letter 219 (87) seems to fix the date of his starting between March 21, the day after the revolt of Bologna, and April 1, when Catherine had the vision of the cross and olive-branch.

a Letter an (88).